

Amstelredamum 1600

DIRECTION

FOR THE GOVERNE-
MENT OF THE TONGVE.

ACCORDING TO GODS
VVORDE.



GOD IS MY



HELPER. *Psalm 46.*

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Cum privilegio Regali.

TO THE READER.

Christian Reader, lamentable and fearfull is the abuse of the tongue, amongst all sortes and degrees of men every where. Hence dayly arise manifold sinnes against God, and innumerable skandales & grievances to our brethren. It would make a mans heart to bleed, to hear, and consider, how swearing, blaspheming, cursed speaking, rayling, backbiting, slandering, chiding, quarrelling, contending, inocking, flattering, lying, dissembling, vaine and idle talking, ouerflow in all places, so as men which feare God had better be anie where, than in the companie of most men. Well then, art thou a man which hast made litle conscience of thy speech and talke? repent seriously of this sin, and amend thy life, least for abusing of thy tongue,, thou crie with Diues in hel, *Send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and coole my tongue.* And if thou be one, which hast had care to order thy selfe in speech and silence according to Gods word, oh, doe it more, For what a shame is it, that men with the same tongue wherewith they confesse the faith, and religion of Christ, should by vain and vngodlie speech, vtterly denie the power thereof. And for thy better help herein, I haue penned these few lines following, concerning the gouernment of the tongue. Use them for thy benefite, and finding profite thereby giue glorie to God.

W. Perkins

OF THE GOVERNEMENT OF
THE TONGVE.

Cap. I.

Of the generall meanes of ruling the tongue.



HE gouernmente of the tongue is a vertue, pertaining the holy vsage of the tongue, according to God his word.

And for the wel ordering of it, two things are requisite; a pure heart, and skil in the language of Canaan.

The pure heart is most necessarie, because it is the fountaine of speech, and if the fountain be defiled, the streams that issue thence cannot be cleane.

And because the heart of man, is by nature a bottomlesse gulfe of iniquitie, two things are to be knowne: first, how it must be made pure: and then how it is alwaies afterward to be kept pure.

The way to get a pure heart, is this. First, thou must seriouslie examine thy life, & thy conscience for all thy sinnes past, then with a heauie and bleeding heart confesse them to God, vtterlie condemning thy self. Thirdly, with deep sighes and groanes of Spirit, crie vnto heauen to God the Father, in the name of

of Christ, for pardon, I say, for pardon of the same sinnes, as it were for life and death, and that, day and night, til the Lord send downe from heauen a sweet certificate into thy perplexed conscience by his holie Spirit, that al thy sinnes are done away. Now, at the same instant, in which pardon shall be graunted, God likewise will once againe stretch forth that mightie hand of his, whereby he made thee, when thou wast not, to make thee a new creature, to creat a new heart in thee, to renew a right spirit in thee, and to stablish thee by his free Spirit. For whome he iustificieth, the also at the same time he sanctifieth

The purified hart appeareth by these signs. I. If thou feele thy selfe to bee displeased at thine owne infirmities and corruptions, and to droup vnder them as men doe vnder bodily sicknesse. II. If thou begin to hate, & to flie thine own personall sins. III. If thou feele a griefe and sorrow, after that thou hast offended God. IIII. If thou hartily desire to abstaine from al maner of sin. V. If thou be carefull to auoid al occasions and entisements to euill. VI. If thou trauel and doe thine indeuour in euery good thing, VII. If thou desire and pray to God, to wash & rinse thine heart in the blood of Christ.

15 When the heart is pure, to keepe it so, is the speciall worke of faith, *which purifieth the heart.*

Faith purifieth the heart, by a particular applying of Christ crucified, with all his merits, ^a *Elisha, when he went vp & lay upon the dead childe, and put his mouth on his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands vpo his hands, & stretched himself upon him. the flesh of the childe waxed warme. Afterward Elisha rose, and spread himself upon him the second time: then the childe needed* ^{ver} *seuen times, & opened his eyes.* So must a man by faith spread himself vpo the crosse of Christ, applying his hāds & feet, to his pierced hāds and his feet, & his wretched heart to Christs bleeding heart, and then he shall feel himself warmed by the heat of Gods Spirite, and sin from day to day crucified with Christ, & his dead heart quickened and revived. And this applying which faith maketh, is done by a kind of reasoning, which faith maketh, thus. Hath God of his mercie, giuen his own Son to be my Sauour, to shed his blood for me? and hath he of his mercie, granted vnto me the pardon of all my sinnes? I will therefore endeavour to keepe my heart and my life vnb-lamable, that I do not offend him herafter in word or deed, as I haue done heretofore.

The language of Canaan, wherby a man, endued with the spirit of adoption, vn-fained-ly calleth vpon the name of God in Christ, and so consequentlie, doth, as it were, familiarlie talk & speak with God. This language must needs be learned, that the tongue may be

The gouernement.

be well gouerned: For man must be first able to talk with God before he can be able wisely to talk with man. For this cause, whē men are to haue cōmunication one with another, they are first of all to bee carefull, that they often make their praiers to God, that hee woulde guide, and blesse them in their speeches, as *Dauid* did: *Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and keepe the doore of my lippes.* And againe: *O Lord open thou my lippes, and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise:* wher we may see, that the mouth is, as it wer, locked vp from speaking any good thing, vntil the Lord open it. And Paul hauing the guift of ordering his tongue in woonderfull measure, yet desireth *the Ephesians to pray for him, that utterāce might be giuer him, and good reason, because God ruleth the tongue.*

CAP. II.

Of the matter of our speech.

THE gouernment of the tongue containeth two partes: Holy speech, and holy silence. In holy speeche must bee considered the matter of our speech and the mānner.

The matter is cōmonly one of these three: either God, our neighbour, or our selues.

As concerning God, this caueat must be remembred, that the honorable titles of his glorious majestie, be neuer taken into our mouthes, vnlesse it bee vpon a waighty and just

juste occasion, so as wee may plainely see,
that glorie will redound to him therby : and
for this cause, the third commandment was
giuen, that men might *not take up the name of* Exod
God in vaine : that is, rashlie and lightly.

And therefore, lamentable and fearfull
is the practise euerie where : For it is a com-
mon thing with men to begin their speech,
and to place the titles of Gods moste high
Majestie in the fore front almost of euerie
sentence, by saying, *O Lord! O God! O good God,*
O mercifull God, O Iesu, O Christ, &c. If a man
be to say any thing, he wil not say, *Yea*, or *nay*
but, *O Lord yea*, or, *O Lord nay*. An earthlie
Prince, if he should haue his name tost in our
mouthes at euerie word, would neuer beare
it, and how should the euerliuing God suffer
it? nay, how can he suffer it? I say no more,
but thou with thy selfe think how, for in the
third commandment the punishment is set
downe, that he will not holde him guiltlesse
that taketh his name in vaine. And the An-
gels in reuerence to Gods Majestie, couer
their faces. Esa. 6. 2.

Concerning our neighbour, we ar to con-
sider whether the thing, which we are about
to speak, be good or euill.

This being weighed, if it be good, and so
commendable, then we ar readilie & chear-
fullie, and that vpon every occasion to vtter
it especially in his absence, whether he bee

a friend or a foe: as S. Iohn writes of Demetrius. *Demetrius* (saith he) *bath good report of all men, and of the truth it selfes yea, & we our selues beare record, & ye know that our testimony is true.*

As for the euill which any man shal know by his neighbour, he is in no wise to speake of it, whether it be an infirmitie, or a grosse sinne, vnles in his conscience he shal find him selfe called of God to speake.

A man is called to speak in three cases: I. when he is called before a Magistrate, and is lawfully required to testify the euil which he knoweth by another. II. When anie is to admonish his brother of any fault for his amendement. III. When the hurt or danger that may arise of the euill, is to be preuented in others. As a man may say to one wel disposed, Take heed of such a mans companie: for he is giuen to such, or such a vice.

To this end, they of the house of Cloe do certifye Paul of the disorders in Corinth. And Joseph certifieth his father of his brethrens slanders. In this case all treasons are to be revealed, as tending to the ruine of the whol common wealth. Thus Elisha reuealeth the secretes of the king of Syria.

Concerning things which are secret in our neighbour, we are not to be suspicious, but to suspend both speech and judgment, *Loue suspects no euil. Iudge nothing* (saith Paule) *before the time, untill the Lord come, who will lighten things,*

things that are hid in darknes, and make the counsels of the heart manifest: Augustin hath a good and a speciall rule to this purpose, that there be three thinges, of which wee must giue no judgment, Gods predestination, the Scriptures, and the estate of men uncalled.

Aug.
conse

As touching a mans selfe, he is neither to praise nor dispraise himself: as Salomō saith, *Let another man praise thee, and not thine owne mouth, a stranger, and not thine owne lippes.* Yet otherwhiles the times do fall out, that a man may vse an holie kind of boasting, especiallie when the disgrace of the person, is the disgrace also of the Gospel, and of Religion, & of God himself, as Paul did, *But wherein (saith he) anie wil vse boldnes (I speake foolishlie) I will vse boldnes. They are Hebrewes, so am I, &c.*

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Cap. III.

Of the maner of our speech, and what must be done, before we speake.

THUS much of the matter of our speech. Now followeth the maner.

In the maner of our speaking, three things are to be pondered, What must be done before we speake: what in speaking: what after we haue spoken.

Before we speake, consideration must be vsed of the thing to be spoken, and of the end. James requireth that men shoulde be slow to speake, and swift to heare. Salomon saith,

James

113 *saith, He that answereth a matter before he hear it, it is follie and shame to him.* The minde is the guide of the tongue: therefore men must consider before they speake. The tongue is the messenger of the heart, and therefore, as oft as we speake without meditation going before, so oft the messenger runneth without his arrand. The tongue is placed in the midst of the mouth, and is compassed in with lips and teeth, as with a double trench, to shew vs, how we are to vse heed and preconsideration before we speake: and therefore, it is good aduise, to keepe the key of the mouth not in the mouth, but in the cupboard of the heart. Augustine saith well, that as in eating and drinking men make choice of meats, so in manifold speeches, we should make choice of talke.

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e. nat.

Here are condemned idle wordes: that is, such words as are spoken to litle or no ende or purpose. And they are not to be esteemed as litle sinnes, when as men are to giue account of euerie idle word.

12. 36.

Cap. III.

What is to be done in speaking, and of wise dome.

VWhen we ar in speaking, two things are to be practised: first, care must be had of the speech, that it be gracious: secondlie, it is to be vttered with conuenient bonds of trueth.

The

The speech is gracious, when it is so vttered, that the graces of God wrought in the heart by the holie Ghost, as it were pictured and painted forth in the same: for speech is the verie image of the heart. Col. 4

Contrarie to this, is *rotten speech*, that is, all such talke that is void of grace, which is the heart and pith of our speech. Ephe

And by this it appeareth, that no vice can be named, but with disliking: and hereupon in Scriptures, when by occasion a vice should be named, in token of a lothing thereof, the name of the vice is omitted, and the name of the contrary vertue vsed in the roome thereof, as in these wordes: *For Iob thought: it may be, that my sonnes haue sinned and blessed, that is, blasphemed God.* This being true, then by proportion, the visible representation of the vices of men in the world, which is the substance and matter whereof plaies and enterludes are made, is much more to be avoided. Ephe
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Gods graces, which we are to shewe forth in our communication, are these: Wisdome, Truth, Reuerence, Modestie, Meeknesse, Sobrietie in iudgement, Vrbanitie, Fidelitie, care of others good name: but let vs consider of them in order. 1. 2
5. 6
9.

Wisdome in our speech is a goodly ornament. The Apostles when they wayted for the holie Ghost in Hierusalem, it descended vpon them in the forme of fierie tongues, and

and then it is said, that they spake as the holie
 187- Ghost gaue them viterance, in Apophthegmes, or
 1 vwise sentences, & he that gouerneth his tong
 wisely, addeth doctrine to the lips; that is, so spea-
 23- keth, as that others be made wise thereby.

This wisdom is then shewed, when a man
 can in judgment apply his talk, & as it were,
 in a good maner, make it fit to al the circum-
 stances of persons, times, places, things, *A*
 11- *foole poureth out al his mind, but a vwise man kee-*
peth in til afterward. A word spoken in his place, is
like apples of gold with pictures of siluer.

Now, he that would haue his speech to bee
 wise, must first of all become a wise man: and
 the wise man of whom the holie Scriptures
 speak, is a godly man, & such a one as feareth
 23- God: because this feare of God, is the *begin-*
 11- *ning and head of vvisdom:* as on the contrarie,
 17- *the foole* wherof the Scripture often speaketh
 is the vngodlie person, that maketh no con-
 science of any sinne: and indeed such a one is
 the most sensles fool of all. He that shal euer
 and anon be casting himselfe into the fire, &
 water, & run vpon dāgerous places to break
 his legges, armes, necke, and further, shal tak
 pleasure in doing all this, is either a foole, or
 a mad man: Now the vngodly man, as oft as
 he sineth, hee endeououreth as much as in
 him lieth, to pitch his soule into hell, and
 whereas he taketh pleasure in sin, he sportes
 himselfe with his own destruction. Further-
 more,

more, the man fearing God, must haue two things in his heart, A perswasion of Gods presence, and Awe.

The perswasion of Gods presence is, whereby a man is continually resolved, that wheresoeuer he is, he stands before god, who doth see euen into the secretes of his heart. This was in Cornelius: *Now therefore, saith he, we are in Gods presence, to hear al things that are commanded thee of God.* A&I

Awe, in regard of God, is that, whereby a man behaueth himselfe reuerentlie, because he is in Gods presence.

Awe is either in regard of sinne, of chastismentes.

Awe in respect of sin, is when one is afraid to sin, fearing not so much the punishment, as the sin it selfe, because it is sin: for he feareth God indeed, which is of this mind, that if there were no Iudge to condemne him, no hel to torment him, no Deuil nor conscience to accuse him, yet he would not sinne, because Gods blessed Majestie is by it offended and displeased: and if he had it in his choise, whether he would sin or loose his life, he had rather die, than willinglie and wittinglie to sin against God. This awe being in Ioseph, was the cause that mooved him, not to commit follie with Putiphars wife. *How then, saith he, can I doe this great wickednes, and sin against God.* Gen.

Awe in chastismets is, when one humbleth himselfe.

himself vnder the mighty hand of God, with
all meeknes, and patience, when God layeth
his hand vpon him more or lesse. When *She-
mi* came foorth and cursed David, and flung
stones at him, what did he? trulie, he stood in
awe of God, and therefore, saide, *What haue I
to do with you, ye sonnes of Zeruiah? for he curseth,*
16. *euē because the Lord hath bidden him curse Da-*
10 *uid, who dare then say, wherfore hast thou done so?*

When a man is thus made wise, that is,
righteous and fearing God, hee is so guided
by the Spirite of feare, that hee cannot but
31 *speake wiselie.* Salomon saith, *The lippes of the
righteous know vwhat is acceptable: but the mouth
of the vicked speaketh froward thinges,* And a-
gain, *The heart of the wise man guideth the mouth
vviselie.* Contrarie to this is fond and foolish
talk: an example hereof wee haue in Luke,
where Pilate wanting the feare of God saith,
I find no fault in Christ, let vs therefore cha-
14 *stise him, and send him away.*

Cap. V.

Of Trueth and of Reuerence in speech.

TRueth of speech is a vertue whereby a
man speaketh as he thinketh: and so con-
sequentlie, he speaketh as euery thing is, so
farre foorth as possiblie he can. It is made a
note of a righteous man, ^a *to speake the trueth
from the heart.* ^b *And they that deale trulie are
Gods delight.*

This

This is alwaies required in al our doctrins, accusations, defences, testimonies, promises, bargainings, counsels, but especiallie, in Iudges and Magistrates, sitting on judgement seat, because then they stand in Gods stead, who is trueth it selfe. prou.

To this place belongeth *Appollogie*, which Matt. is, when a Christian, called before a Magistrate, and straitly examined of his religion, confesseth Christ boldlie, and denieth not the trueth.

Cótrarie to this, is lying, cogging, glosing, smoothing, dissembling: As for example, Gehazi, after he had receiued money and garments of Naaman the Syrian, against Elishas will, hee went and stood before his maister, 1. Kin. who said vnto him, *Whence comcest thou Gehazi?* who making it nothing to lie for a vantage, smoothed it ouer finely, and said, *Thy seruant went no whither.* To the like effect and purpose, report is made of a rich man that had two chestes: the one whereof he calls, *all the world*, the other his friend. In the first he puts nothing: in the second he puts all his substance. When his neighbour came to borrowe money, he vseth to answer, *Trulie I haue neuer a pennie in all the world:* meaning his emptie chest, but I will see (saith hee) what my friend can doe, looking thereby for interest by the money out of his other chest.

This

This vice is very common, and it is a rare thing to find a man that maketh a conscience of a lie.

Lying is when a man speaketh otherwise than the truth is, with a purpose to deceive. Here note that there is great difference between these two speeches, *it is an untrueth, & it is a lie*. The first may be used when a man speaketh falsehoods. But in using the second, we must be heedie and sparing: for when a man is challenged for a lie, three things are laid to his charge. I. That he speaketh falsely. II. That he is willing to do so. III. That he hath a desire and purpose to deceive.

Quest. Whether may not a man lie, if it be for the procuring of some great good to our neighbour, or to the whole countrie where we are?

Ans. No: Reasons are these. I. Lying is forbidden, *as an abomination to the Lord*. II. *are not to do any euill, that good might come thereof*. III. He which lieth, in so doing, informeth himselfe to the deuill, who is the father thereof.

Obiect. I. Such lying is for our neighbors good, and not against charitie. *Ans.* No: for *charitie reioiceth in the truth*.

Obiect. II. The holie Scriptures haue mentioned the lies of the Patriarchs. *Ans.* We must not liue by examples, against the rules of Gods word.

Obiect.

Obiect. III. Rahack, and the Midwives of Egypt, in saving the spies, and in preserving the Israelites infants, vse lying, and are commended for their facts. *Ans.* They are commended for their faith, not for anie lying.

As trueth is required in speech, so also reuerence to God and man.

Reuerence to God is, when we so speake of God, and vse his titles, that we shew reuerence our selues, and moue reuerence in others. *If thou wilt not keep (saith the Lord) and doo all the vvords of this Lawe (that are written in this booke) and feare the glorious and fearful name THE LORD THY GOD, then the Lords vvill make thy plagues vvonderful.*

Here take heed of all manner of blaspheming, which is, when men vse such speeches of God, as doe either detract anie thing from his Maiestie, or ascribe any thing to him, not becoming him: a sinne of all to be detested. **Reasons.** I. A blasphemer is viler than the rest of creatures: for they praise God in his kind, and shew forth his power, goodness, and wisdom: but he dishonoureth God in his wretched speech. II. He is as the mad dog, that flieth in his masters face, who keepeth him, & giueth him bread. III. Cursing in blasphemies, sheweth a man to bee the childe of the deuill, and no childe of God as yet.

A father lying on his death bed, called the

children to him, which he kept, & told them that onlie one of them was his owne sonne, and that the rest were onelie brought vp by him, therefore, vnto him he gaue al his goods, but which of these three was his natural sonne, he wold not in anie wise declare. When he was dead, euerie one of the three children pleaded that he was the sonne, and therefore that the goods were his. The matter being brought before a Iudge, could not be ended, but the Iudge was constrained to take this course: he caused the dead corpes of the father to be set vp against a tree, and commanded the three sonnes to take bowes and arrows, and to shoote against their father, to see who could come neereft the heart. The first and second did shoot at their father, and hit him, the third was angrie with both the other, and refused to shoote. This done, the Iudge gaue sentence, that the two first were no sonnes, but the third onlie, and that hee should haue the goods. The like triall may be vsed to knowe who be God his children. Such persons, with whome blaspheming is rife, are the verie deuils incarnate, and the children of the deuill, who rend God in peeces, and shoot him through with their darts, as it said of the Egyptian when he blasphemed, that he smote; or pearced through God his name.

Again, here we must be warned to take heed

heed of that customable swearing, and also of perjurie. It is a verie strange sin, for the perjured person doeth not onely sinne himselfe, but withal he endeouureth to entangle God in the same sinne with him selfe.

Further, take heed, least thou doest either make or recite the jests, which ar contriued out of phrases of Scripture: which are verie manie, and verie vsuallie rehearsed in companie. The * oyle wherewith the Tabernacle, and the Arke of the Testament, and the Priestes were annointed, was holie: & therefore no man might put it to anie other vases, as to annoint his owne flesh therewith, or to make the like vnto it. * Pilare, a poore paynime, when hee heard the name of the Sonne of God, was afrade: and wee much more ought to tremble at the word of God, not to make our selues merrie with it. And therefore the scoffing of Iulian the Apostata is verie fearfull, who was woont to reach Christians boxes on the eare, and withal bid them turne the other; and obey their maisters commandement, * Who soeuer shall smite thee on the right cheeke, turne to him the other also. And he denied pay, and like reward to his souldiours, that were Christians, because, he said, he would make them fit for the kingdom of heauen, considering that Christ had said, *Blessed are the poore in spirit, for theirs is the kingdome of heauen.*

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7.25. Lastly, auoid all imprecations & cursings, either against men or other creatures: For God in iudgmēt, to punish such cursed speaking, often bringes to passe such imprecations: as may appeare in the Iewes, who at the arraignment of Christ, cried, saying, *His blood be vpon vs, and vpon our children*, which imprecation is verified vpon them til this day.

Reuerence to man is in two respects, eyther because he is created after the image of God, or because he is aboue vs in age, gifts, authoritie.

In the first consideration, men must haue care to giue such names to children, as are proper and fit, vsuall and knowne: the signification whereof, may admonish them of the promises of God, of godlinesse, or of some good dutie. And there be foure allowed ends of giuing names. I. To preserue the memorie of some thing by the name giuen, as *Adam, Israell, Isaac*. II. To signifie some thinge to come, as *Euah, Abraham, Iohannes, Petrus*. III. To preserue the name and memorie of Parents and kindred, which was vsed in the birth of *Iohn Baptist*. This custom may still be retained, if ther be any good example in the ancestors, that the childe may follow. IIII. That the life & profession of good men may be reuiued in the renewing of their names.

Here we must take heed, in no wise to giue to children, the proper names or titles of God,

God, as *Iesus, Immanuel, &c.*

Neither are the professors of the Gospel, to be intituled by the names of such, as haue bene famous instruments in the Church, as to be called Calvinists, Lutheranes, &c. Now this I say, that euerie one of you saith, *I am Pauls, and I am Apollos, & I am Cephas, & I am Christs: is Christ denied? or was Paule crucified for you? either were ye baptized in the name of Paul?*

And it is a bold part of the pestilent generation of Papists, who tak to themselues the name of Iesuites, for the name of *Christian* was giuen to the disciples at Antioch, not by the deuise of man, but by diuine oracle.

Reuerence to man, as he is superiour, is in vsing fit titles of reuerence: Sara is commended in Scriptures, for obeying her husband, and for calling him *Sir*. But excesse must here be auoided, when titles of honour, proper to God, are giuen to men, as Head of the Catholike Church, to the Pope: *Ladie & Queen* of heauen, to the mother of Christ. This saule Christ reprov'd in the yong man, saying, *Why callest thou me good, there is none good but God.*

Cap. VI.

Of Modestie and Meeknesse.

Modestie in speach hath diuers aspects: first, if a man speake anie thing of himselfe: that is, in his owne commendation, let him alter the person, and speake of himselfe.

as of another, *I know a man* (saith Paule, speaking of himselfe) *in Christ, aboue fourteene years agoe, &c. which vvas taken vp into Paradise, and heard words vvhich cannot be spoken*: And Iohn saith of himselfe, *When Iesus saw his mother, & the disciple vvhom he loued, standing by, &c.* Here take heed of boasting, whereby men imitate the deuil, who said, * Al this power wil I giue thee, and the glorie of those kingdomes, for that is deliuered vnto me, and to whomsoever I will giue it.

Againe, when a man shal haue occasion to speak of his own faults and corruptions, let him speake the vttermost against himselfe, as Paule called himselfe *the first of all sinners*: But if he be to mention anie thing of himselfe, that may minister matter of commendation, let his speech rather incline to the defect, than to the excesse, as Paule saith, * I am the least of the Apostles, which am not meet to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God.

Secondlie, in the mentioning of things which moue blushing, we are to vse as seemlie words as may be chosen. Gen. 4. 1. *Afterward Adam knew Heuah his vwife, which conceived and bare Cam.* 1. Sam, 24. 4. *And vvhhen hee came to the sheepcoats, by the vvaie there vvas a caue, and Saule vvent in to couer his feet: that is, to do his easment.*

Meeknes also is required in communication,

tion, which is, when a man vseth curteous & fair speech: *Put them in remembrance, &c. that they be curteous, shewing all meeknes to al men, for we our selues also wer in times past vnwise, disobedient. &c. Tit. 1

Meeknes and gentlenes shewes it selfe in answeres and reptoofes.

Our answeres must be soft, that anger be not kindled nor increased. *A soft answer putteth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger.* Nabal by churlish language prouoked Dauid to wrath, but Abigail by the contrarie appeased him. Gedeon spake gentlie to the men of Ephraim, when they were angry against him, and appeased them. For the text saith, When he had thus spoken, then their spirites abated towards him. Therefore, Salomon saith well, *A joy commeth to a man by the answer of his mouth, but how good is a word in due season. Pro. 15. 1. Sa. 1. Ind.

Nowe if any will raile on vs, our dutie is, not to raile again. *Blesse the that persecute you, blesse, I say, and curse not. *Be curteous not rendring euil for euil, neither rebuke for rebuke, but contrariwise, blesse, knowing, that ye be thereunto called, that you should be heires of blessing. And therefore, in this case, either silence is to bee vsed, or at the most, onelie a iust and manifest defence of our innocencie to be made. Ezechias commaunded the people to bee silent, and not Ro. 12. 17.

to say any thing to the speach of Rabsachai,
now flattering, now threatning. When Eli
spake hardly of Anna, and bad her put away
her drunkennes, she answered, *Nay, my Lord,
I am a woman troubled in spirit, I haue neither
drunk wine nor strong drinke, but haue poured out
my soule before the Lord. Thus Ioseph cleareth
himself, saying, I haue done nothing, wherefore
they should put me in the dungeon. And Daniel
to Nebuchadnerzar, Vnto thee, O King, I haue
done no hurt. And our Sauour Christ, when
the Iewes said vnto him, Saie we not true, that
thou art a Samaritane and hast a deuill? answered
I haue not a deuill, but I honour my father, and ye
haue dishonoured me. And Paule being to make
an Apologie for himself, begins thus, Men
and brethren, I haue in all good conscience serued
God vntill this day.*

Now when a man hath thus cleared him-
self, though his own word in his own behalfe
take no effect, yet let him patiently commit
his cause to God, who in time will manifest
the truth, and bring it to light: As David
did, *Judge me, O God (saith he) for I haue walked
in mine innocencie. And againe, The wicked wat-
cheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him: but
the Lord will not leaue him in his hand, nor con-
demne him, when he is iudged.*

Meeknes in reproofs is, when any shal ad-
monish his brother of any fault for his a-
mendement, with the like moderation that
Chi-

Chirurgions vse, who beeing to set the arme
or leg, that is out of joint, handle it so ten-
derlie, that the patient shal scant feelee when
the joint falles in againe. This counsell Paule
giueth, *Brethren, if anie man be fallen by occasion,*
into anie fault, ye which are spirituall, restore such
a one, or set him in ioint againe with the spirite of
meeknes. This was practised by Abraham to-
wards Lot, when their heardmen were at va-
riance, saying, *Let there be no strife I praise thee,*
betweene thee and me, neither between mine heard-
men and thine, for we are brethren.

And this is done foure waies: First, when
we reprove a godlie man generallie, as Na-
than did Dauid by a parable. Secondly, when
in the rone of a reprove, we put an exhortati-
on: In the exhortatiō insinuating an oblique
reproof, as when a man shal swear in his talk,
I shal not neede alwaies to say, *Ye do verie ill to*
swear, & so to dishonor God: but I wil lap it vp
in forme of an exhortation, as pilles are lapt
in sugar, by saying, Yea and nay: yea and nay
shall serue among vs: *Rebuke not an Elder, but*
exhort him as a father, and yong men as brethren,
saith Paule to Timothie. Thirdly, when the
reprooffe is propounded in a mans own per-
son, as though he were faultie which repro-
ueth. Paul practised this: *Now these things, bre-*
thre (saith he) I haue figuratiuelie applied to mine
owne selfe, and to Apollos, for your sakes, that ye
might learn by vs, that no man presume aboue that
which

welchis vritten. Fourthlie, when the fault is directlie reprooued, but yet partlie with prefaces, that we doe it of loue, that we wish well to the partie, that we speake as considering our selues, that we also are in danger of the same fault: and partlie, by framing the reproofe out of the word of God, that the partie may see himselve, rather to be reprooued by God, than by vs: after this maner the inferiour may admonish his superiour, especiallie, when there is no other way of redresse, and he is to listen, yeelding himselve tractable. Naaman is aduised by his seruant, who saide: * Father, if the Prophet had commaunded thee a great thing, wouldest thou not haue done it: how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash and be cleane: Then went he downe, and washed himselve seuen times in Iordan.

When any shall in this maner be admonished of a fault, they are to yeeld themselves tractable and thankfull, and hartily thankfull for so good a friende. Notable is the speach of the Psalmist, * Let the righteous smite me, it is a benefit: and let him reprove me, it is the chiefe ointment, let it not bee wanting to my head. And Salomon saith, A reproofe entreteth more into him that hath vnderstanding, than an hundred stripes into a foole. And, Open rebuke is better than secrete loue.

Cap. VII.

*Of Sobrietye, Vrbanytie, Fidelitie, and Care
of others good name.*

Sobrietye in judgement is, when a man
Seither suspendeth his opinion of his
neighbours sayings or doinges, or els spea-
keth as charitable as he can, by saying as li-
tle as may be, if the thing be euill: or by in-
terpreting al in the better part, if the speach
or action be doubtful. Therefore do thus: de-
spise not thy neighbour, but thinke thy selfe
as bad a sinner, and that the like defects may
befall thee. If thou canst not excuse his do-
ing, excuse his intent, which may be good:
or, if the deed be euill, thinke it was done of
ignorance: if thou canst not no way excuse
him, think some great temptation beset him
and that thou shouldest be worse, if the like
temptation befell thee: & giue God thanks,
that the like as yet hath not befallen thee.
Dispise not a man being a sinner, for though
he be euil to day, he may turne to morrow.

Here is condemned all heady and rash
judgment, whereby either men make things
worse than they are, or els they take & turn
all things to things to the worse part. Thus
the Deuill dealt with Iob, saying, *Doeth Iob
feare God for naught, &c. but stretch out thine
hande nowe, and touch all that hee hath, to see if
hee will not blaspheme thee to thy face.* Such

was the dealing of Doeg with Dauid. I *save*
the son of Ishai (saith he) *when he came to Ahime-*
lech, the sonne of Ahitub, vwho asked counsel of the
Lord for him, and gaue him victualles, & he gaue
him also the sword of Goliath the Philistim. Here
the back-biter concealeth the necessarie cir-
cumstances, wherby Ahimelech might haue
bene excused, as that Dauid asked bread, be-
ing hungry, and that he told not Ahimelech
that he was out of Sauls fauour: but he tur-
neth all his speech to this ende, to bring the
Priest into suspicion with Saule. Thus the
Pharisees delt, Iohn came neither eating nor
drinking, and they say, He hath a deuil. The
son of man came eating and drinking, and
they say, Behold, a glutton, and a drinker of
wine, & a friend of Publicanes and sinners.

Contrarie to this sobriety, is flatterie, wher
by for hope either of fauour or gaine, men,
and especiallie, such as are of dignitie and
place, are soothed vp in their sins, and extol-
led aboue measure, euen to their faces. As
when Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, & sate
on the iudgment seat, and made an oration,
the people gaue a shout, saying, *the voice of a*
god, & not of a man. But marke what Salomon
saith, *He that praiseth his friend with a loud voice*
rising earlie in the morning, it shall bee counted to
him for a curse. One being asked, which was
the worst of all beastes, answered, Of wilde
beasts, the tyrant: of tame beastes, the Flatte-

ter. And another said, that Flatterers were worse than crows: for they eat onlie deade carrion: these feed on liuing men.

And of al kinds of flattery, that is the worst when a man shal speak fair to his neighbours face, and praise him, but behinde his backe, speake his pleasure, and euen cut his throat, Dauid complaineth of his familiar friends, that the words of his mouth wer softer than butter, yet warre was in his heart: that his words were more gentle than oyle, yet they wer swords. The Pharisees, behinde Christs back, took counsel, how they might entangle him in talke, but before his face they say, Maister, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God trulie, neither carest thou for anie man, for thou considerest not the person of men. psal

Urbanitie is a grace of speech, whereby men in seemly maner vse pleasantnes in talk for recreation, or for such delight as is joyned with profite to themselues and others. The Preacher saith, * There is a time to laugh & a time to weep. * When the Lord brought againe the captiuitie of Sion, wee were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with joy. Eccl
psal

Now, this mirth must be joyned with the feare of God, otherwise, Salomon saith wel, * I haue said to laughter, Thou art mad: and of joy, what is that thou doest? And Christ saith,

faith; *Wo to you that now laugh, for ye shall weep. Secondly, with compassion, and sorrow for Gods people in affliction and misery. *They drink wine in boules, and anoint themselves with chiefointments, but no man is sorie for the affliction of Ioseph. Thirdly, it must be sparing and moderate. Paul condemneth such as are louers of pleasures, more than of God. Fourthly, it must be void of the practise of sin. Moses is commended that he refused the pleasures of sinne.

The vsual time of mirth is at meates. And here Sampsons practise may bee followed, who at his mariage feast propounded a riddle or hard question to his friends: and Ambrose thinketh hee did this, to stoppe the mouths of talkers, & to occupie their wits.

Withal it must be remembred to be a christian dutie, euen at the Table to maintaine talk of religion, and of duties of Godlines, after the example of our Sauour Christ: though man vpon litle ground think otherwise. Tertullian recordeth of the Christians of his time, that they vsed in their loue-feasts to talk together, as considering with themselves, that they had God himselfe as an eare-witnes vnto them. Chrysostome of this point saith well. I would to God (saith he) that in taverne, and feasts, and at baths, men wold talk and dispute of Hel, for the remembring of hel, would hinder a man from
fal-

falling to hel. And it was the maner of the
Primatiue Church, at dinner and supper to
vse the reading of the Scriptures. *When ye come
to the Table* (saith Augustine) *heare that vvhich*
*is read according to custome, vvithout anie stirre
or strining: that your mouthes may not onlie re-
ceiue the meate, but your eares may hunger after
the vvorde of God.*

And this holie reioycing at meats, is spe-
ciallie to be vsed with such as are godlie. As
Salomó saith, that he* which eateth at the co-
uetous mans table, shall vomite his morsels,
and shall loose his sweet words. The faithful
at Ierusalem did break* bread together, with
gladnes and singlenes of heart.

Quest. Whether jesting be tollerable in a-
ny sort, or nor?

Answ. That jesting which standeth in
quips, rantes, and girds, which serueth onlie
for the offence of some, with the delight of
others, is not tollerable: because* all speech
must edifie, and minister grace to the hea-
rers: neither doeth it agree with Christian
grauitie and modestie. But two kindes of je-
sting are tollerable, the one is a moderate
and sparing mirth, in the vse of things indis-
ferent, in season conuenient, without the
least skandall of anie man, and with profite
to the hearers. The second, is that which the
Prophets vsed, when they jested against wic-
ked persons, yet so as withall, they sharplie

repro-

reprooueth their finnes. * At noone Eliah
mocked them, and said, Crie aloud, for he is
a God: either he talketh, or pursueth his e-
nemies, or is in his journey, or it may be hee
sleepeth, and must be awaked.

As for laughter, it may be vsed, otherwise
God would neuer haue given that power &
facultie vnto man: but the vse of it must bee
both moderate and seldome, as sorrow for
our finnes is to be plentifull and often. This
we may learne in Christs example, of whom
we read, that he wept three times, at the de-
struction of Ierusalem, at the raising of La-
zarus, and in his agonie: but we neuer reade
that he laughed.

Fidelitie, is constancie in all our lawfull
sayings and promises.

A promise is to be made with this condi-
tion, (If God will) and then if a man be pre-
vented by death, or by anie like meanes, hee
is not to be blamed: otherwise, a mans law-
full worde and promise bindeth him accord-
ing to the will and pleasure of him, to whō
it is made.

Now, if afterward it be hurtfull to him that
made it, he may craue to bee free from his
promise, and libertie being granted, take it.
But a promise bound with an oath is to bee
kept, though priuate hinderances followe:
yet so as the Magistrat may order the mat-
ter, and proceed in equitie, that the dam-
mage

image may bee the lesse.

The last grace which is to be vsed in speech is care of our neighbours good name, which is far better to him than great riches.

Here is condemned the tale-bearer, which of an euill minde telleth a thing of an other, to bring him into hatred, or to reuenge himselfe, or to get something, which otherwise could not obtaine.

This tale-bearing is of diuers sortes, One when men whisper abroade secretly the report of an other, whereas they should rather admonish the partie, as *Cham* when hee had seene his fathers nakednes, ranne straight & told his brethren. The second, when they adde, or change the thing saide or done, as it serueth for their purpose. Some of the witnessses which came against Christ, charged him to say, *I will destroy this Temple, which is made wvith handes, and in three daies build another wvithout bandes.* Where first they change his meaning: for Christ spake of the temple of his body. Secondly, they adde to the words. For Christ said not, *I will destroy this Temple, but, destroy ye this Temple.* Therefore, the holy Ghost noteth them with the name of *false witnesses bearers.* The third, when men surmise, and tell that which was neuer done. When *Jeremie* was going out of *Ierusalem*, to the land of *Benjamin*, and was in the gate of *Benjamin*, *Irijah* tooke him, and said, *This*

jest to the Chaldeans. Then said Ieremie, That is false, I flie not to the Chaldeans, but he would not heare him.

Gal. 1. The fourth is the colloured talebearing, when one speaketh euil of another, with fine prefaces and preambles, faining that hee is verie sorie that his neighbour hath done such, or such a thing: that he speaketh it not of malice but of a good mind: that he is constrained to speake: that he speaketh not all that he could speak: that the partie to whom the tale is told, must keep it secrete. Luther writeth of this faulte verie well. This vice (saith he) whereby we tell abroad the things which we heare of others, and take them in worse part, is verie rife, and of great force to sowe discordes: the rather because it often sheweth it self vnder the pretence and name of counsell and good aduise. And it is a notable visard for a tale-bearer, to transforme himselfe into an Angell of light, and vnder zeale for Gods glorie, to backbite and accuse his neighbour of heresie, errour, wicked life.

Therefore, the Prophetes meaning is that we should conceale the euils that be in our neighbour, and not speake them to others, though he be an enemy, and deserue it at our handes, and onelie speake of those good things in him, which seem to preserue concorde, for this we would that men shuld

of the Tongue.

doe vnto vs. Yea, and let vs take heede, that we judge not, or condemne any mans saying or doing rashlie.

Augustine saith, That this was the care which his mother had towards her enemies. To doe this, is a notable point of just dealing, but indeed there is no man vtterlie without this fault in this life: such is our wretched estate in this worlde. For though some are of this minde, that they desire not to haue other mens wants told them, and will not take all in worse parte, yet if they be tolde and taken in worse part of others, they can willinglie hear them, neither will they checke the teller, but suffer bad surmises to take place with them. But Gedaliah the sonne of Ahicham excelled in the contrarie vertue, who chose rather to hazard his life, than to suspect euil by Ismael.

This tale-bearing is the common Tabletalk in England: and it is woonderfull to see, how those, who are otherwise godlie, are ouertaken with it: but men must learne to stand more in awe of Gods commandement, and also to consider, that the same thing a man speaketh of another, cometh home againe by his owne doore. Wherefore, when men shall enter anie euill communication of others, we are to interrupt it by other talk, as not regarding it.

Here remember, that when gouernours

The gouernement

and Magistrates shall vse hard wordes, not in the way of defamation, but for the reproofing of a vice, it is not to slander: as, *O foolish Galathians: O generation of vipers.* And Christ termed Herod, *Foxe.*

Cap. VIII.

Of the bondes of trueth.

THVS much of grace in speach. Nowe followeth bondes of trueth, whereby the trueth of our talke is testified and confirmed.

There are three: A simple assertion, an asseueration, an oath.

A simple assertion, is either a simple affirmation, as *yea, yea*: or a simple negation, as *nay, nay*: they are to be vsed onely in our familiar and common talke. * Let your communication be *yea, yea: nay, nay*: and whatsoever is more cometh of euill.

If the trueth which we affirme or deny, be doubtfull or contingent, then such clauses as these (*It is so, or it is not so as I thinke, as I remember, as I take it*) are to be added. If one shall say, *It is so*, and afterwards it prooue otherwise, he receiueth discredit, because hee spake an vtrueth. But if he shall say, *I thinke it is so*, though it fall out otherwise, yet he saueh his credite, because hee deceiueth not, but onely is deceiued.

An asseueration is, when one doeth vhe-

mently affirme or deny any thing. This is not to be vsed at euery word: but then only, when a truth of greater importance is to be confirmed. When the false Prophets among the Iewes and the Priests would not beleene that Ieremie was sent of God; what saith he? not simply, *The Lord hath sent me*: but, *In truth the Lord hath sent me*. Our sauour Christ, when he vsed to speake any waightie matter, vsed *Amen, Amen: Verely, verely*: which is a plaine asseueration: for, *Amen* is more than a simple affirmation, and it is lesse than an oath: as the very sence of the word doth importe, which is no more, but *Truelie, Certainlie*.

The third is an oath, which must not bee made by anie thing in heauen or earth, but onlie by the name of God alone.

It must be vsed as the last refuge and remedie of all. For when anie truth of greater importance is to be confirmed, and all signs, euidences, prooffes, witnesses, faile among men on earth: then we may lawfullie fetch the Lord as a witnesse from heauen, who is the knower of all truth.

And in this case an oath may bee taken, either publikelie before a Magistrate, or priuately among priuate persons, if it bee done with reuerence and consideration: as it was between Iacob and Laban.

The gouernement.

Cap. IX.

What is to be done, when we haue spoken.

After a man hath spoken his minde, verie fewe wordes more are to be added. Hee that hath knowledge spareth his wordes. * In manie wordes there cannot want iniquitie : but he that refrayneth his lippes is wise.

He that speaketh many words, speaks either false things, or superfluous, or both: as when a riuer ouerfloweth, the water gathereth much slime: so, many words, many faults. When a vessel being smitten, makes a great noise, it is a token that it is emptie: and so, the sound of manie wordes shewes a vaine hart. The Gentiles haue said, that God gaue a man one tongue and two eares, that hee might heare more and speak lesse. Val. Maximus reporteth of Xenocrates, that being in the companie of som that vsed rayling speeches, held his tongue, and being asked why he did so, answered, That it had repêted him that he had spoken, but it neuer repented him that he had held his peace. And the proverbis, *He that will speake vwhat he vwill, shall heare vwhat he would not.* To the framing of our speach, Ambrose requireth three things, a yoke, a ballance, and a metwand: a yoke, to keepe it in a stayed grauitie: a ballance, to quod it waight of reason: a mete-wand, to keepe

keepe it in measure and moderation.

This rule must be practised carefullie, for the avoiding of chydng, brawling, and contention. *Let nothing be done by contention.* Phil. 2. 3. Let Students and Schollers learne to practise this: for what shall another mans opinion hurt thee, though in reasoning he be not of thy minde in euery point?

Here take heed of the Spirit of contradiction, whereby some by thwarting and contradicting euerie man, at length prooue either obstinate Heretikes, or lewd Atheistes, and make no bones to contradict the holie Ghost, and to cal the Scriptures in question, and dispute that there is no God.

Now, if a man speake necessarie thinges, though he continue his speech til midnight, as Paule did, it cannot be called immoderate or superfluous talk.

Cap. X.

Of Writing.

AL this which is set downe concerning speech, must as well bee practised in writing as in speaking. Whereby are condemned ballads, books of loue, all idle discourses and histories, being nothing els but enticements and baytes vnto manifold sins, fitter for Sodome and Gomorrah than for Gods Church. And it must be followed as well in speaking of Latine, or any other tong,

in English, yet in Latine, they make no bones
 of it, saying: *Adhercule, medijs fidius, adipol, per
 deos immortales*. And whereas they holde but
 one God in judgment, yet in their Latin ex-
 ercises, they speak of Iupiter, and in
 mortall gods, after the manner of
 then. What a shame is this, that a Christian
 & that in christian schools, should eithe
 shamed, or not vse to speak as a Christian
 as Atheists do? If thou haue man
 and knowest not how to vse then.
 which hath but his mother tongue a-
 ring it aright, is a better Linguist than



Cap. XI.

Of Silence.

V Ife and godlie silence is as excel-
 lent a vertue, as holie speech: for
 he knoweth not how to speak, which know-
 eth not how to hold his tongue. The rule of
 our silence must bee the Lawe of God. By
 meanes of which, wise consideration must
 be had, whether the thing which we haue in
 minde, be for Gods glorie, and our neigh-
 bours good: which done, we are answerably
 to speake or to be silent.

Here must bee considered the thinges of
 which silence must be vsed, and of the per-
 sons before whome. The things are manie.
 First, if any truth be to the hindrance, either
 of Gods glorie, or of the good of our
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